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| Notice of Allowability | Application No. | Applicant(s) | |
| | 10/601,508 | STRZYZEWSKI, PIOTR | |
| | Examiner | Art Unit | |
| | Monica D. Harrison | 2813 | |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTO-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to applicant's amendment filed 11/22/04.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-14.
3. The drawings filed on 23 June 2003 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some* c) None of the:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
6. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____ 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____ 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment 8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
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DETAILED ACTION

1. Applicant's amendment filed 11/22/04 has been entered.

Allowable Subject Matter

2. Claims 1-14 are allowed over the prior art of record.

Reasons for Allowance

3. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The primary reason for allowance of the claims is that the prior art neither teaches nor fairly suggest a method for treating semiconductor substrates as presented in independent claims 1 and 6. Major emphasis is being placed upon the provisions of "*when the connecting door is opened, a gas stream flows from the transfer chamber into the treatment chamber and is maintained during loading of the treatment chamber through the fact that the pressure in the transfer chamber is slightly higher than the pressure in the treatment chamber (claim 1) and the transfer chamber is flooded with an inert gas before the connecting door associated with this treatment chamber is opened, the pressure difference between the transfer chamber and the treatment chamber being maintained through the fact that, with the gas flows into the transfer chamber, on the one hand, and into the treatment chamber, on the other hand, remaining constant, the pressure in transfer chamber and/or treatment chamber is controlled by varying the evacuation power (claim 6)*" in combination with other limitations of the said claims and their dependent ones.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

4. Okutani (5,135,608) discloses a method of producing semiconductor devices.

Okutani discloses all claimed features of the present invention except for maintaining a gas stream flow through the transfer chamber and the treatment chamber during loading of the treatment chamber through the fact that the pressure in the transfer chamber is slightly higher than the pressure in the treatment chamber. Okutani discloses a vacuum load lock capable of effecting evacuation and introducing an inert gas also, the interior of its treatment chamber is purged with an inert gas maintaining a pressure equal to or greater than the atmospheric pressure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Monica D. Harrison whose telephone number is 571-272-1959. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7:00am-3:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Carl Whitehead Jr. can be reached on 571-272-1702. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Craig A. Thompson

**CRAIG A. THOMPSON
PRIMARY EXAMINER**

Art Unit: 2813

Monica D. Harrison
AU 2813

mdh
February 15, 2005